

Appl. No. 10/026,484
Amdt. Dated Nov. 7, 2003
Reply to Office Action of Sep 25, 2003

REMARKS

Claim Rejections under 35 USC § 102

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 2, 6, 7, 11, 12, 15, 16, and 20 as being anticipated by Holman et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication US 2002/0131750 A1 "Holman").

In response to these rejections, applicant has amended independent claims 1 and 11 to incorporate novel limitations therein. By such amendments, applicant believes that amended claims 1 and 11 are now patentable over the cited prior art. Detailed explanations are given below.

Regarding amended claim 1, an optical fiber cable holder fixed on a base plate comprises a clasp portion having a top cover and two side walls depending from opposite sides of the top cover, and a fixing portion fixing the optical fiber cable holder on the base plate. *At least one bent arm extends upwardly* from at least a side of the top cover other than the sides from which the side walls depend to prevent excessive bending of the cables, and the clasp portion includes at least one spring arm extending inwardly from at least one of the side walls to hold the cables in the clasp portion. However, Holman does *not* disclose at least one spring arm extending inwardly from at least one of the side walls.

Therefore, amended claim 1 is novel over Holman, and should be in a condition for allowance.

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Regarding amended claim 11, an optical fiber cable holder includes a clasp portion having a top cover and two side walls depending downwardly from two opposite sides thereof, a fixing portion connecting with the side walls of the clasp portion and fixing the optical fiber cable holder to the base plate, and at least one bent arm extending from the top cover of the clasp portion to prevent excessive bending of the fibers; wherein the clasp portion includes at least one spring arm extending inwardly from at least one of the side walls to hold the fibers in the clasp portion. Holman does *not* disclose at least one spring arm extending inwardly from at least one of the side walls. Therefore, amended claim 11 is novel over Holman, and should be in a condition for allowance.

Claim Rejections under 35 USC § 103

The Examiner has rejected claims 10 and 19 as being unpatentable over Holman, and has rejected claims 4, 5, 13, and 14 as being unpatentable over Holman in view of Daoud (U.S. Patent No. 6,259,851 "Daoud '851").

In response to this rejection, applicant has cancelled claims 2-10 and 12-19, and incorporated the limitations of claims 2, 4 and 5 into claim 1, and incorporated the limitations of claims 13 and 14 into claim 11. The resulting amended claims 1 and 11 are patentably distinct over the prior art cited by Examiner. Amended claim 1 is unobvious, as discussed below.

The Examiner states that Holman discloses all of the proposed limitations except for the clasp portion as further including at least one

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spring arm slanting inwardly from at least one of the side walls to hold the cables in the clasp portion. Daoud '851, however, teaches a fiber holder with an alternatively designed clasp portion having a spring arm on the side wall slanting inwardly giving its tapered shape (Figure 3 element 6—leftmost wall portion with middle extending tab).

Applicant respectfully traverses Examiner on this point for the following reasons.

Firstly, it is impossible to combine Holman with Daoud '851 to come up with the instant invention. A spring arm is assumed to extend or slant inwardly from one or both of the side walls 104, 106 of Holman in the same manner as in the instant invention. However, if the spring arm is too short, it would not perform any useful function. If the spring arm is long enough, it would at the very least block the fiber cables going through the openings 116 that are nearest to the leftmost side wall 104 or the rightmost side wall 106. Therefore, such a combination is not practicable, and could not possibly fulfill the purpose and advantage of the instant invention.

Secondly, it is unnecessary to combine Holman with Daoud '851 or other prior art. This is because there are a plurality of fingers 112 between the leftmost side wall 104 and the rightmost side wall 106, and openings 116 are defined by the plurality of fingers 112. As a result, every opening 116 is used to receive a single fiber cable firmly and individually.

Finally, even if Holman and Daoud '851 were combined, the combination would not yield the same fiber cable holder as defined in the

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instant invention. Further, it would be very difficult for a person of ordinary skill in the art to come up with the instant invention when reading Holman and Daoud '851, since the structure of the cable holder in Holman is markedly different from that of the instant invention.

Therefore, amended claim 1 is unobvious over Holman in view of Daoud '851, and should be in a condition for allowance.

Amended claim 11 is also unobvious and patentable, since it incorporates more limitations than does amended claim 1.

Claim 20 defines a lower locking leg and an upper stop latch discretely formed on EACH (*emphasis added*) of said side walls and commonly defining therebetween a gap to receive the base plate therein.

Differently, in Holman et al., the lower locking leg and the upper stop latch (46, 48 alleged by the Examiner) are RESPECTIVELY formed on the pair of side walls (20, 22 alleged by the Examiner), NOT on EACH of the side walls (20, 22). In fact, the element (46, 48) are the left and right stoppers to grasp the bridge (62) of the base (70) in the horizontal direction, NOT the upper and lower stoppers to grasp the base (70) in the vertical direction.

Thus, claim 20 is believed to patentably distinguish over the cited references.

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In view of the above claim amendments and remarks, the subject application is believed to be in a condition for allowance and an action to such effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,
Kun-Tsan Wu
Chun Yu-Lee

By 
Wei Te Chung

Registration No.: 43,325
Foxconn International, Inc.
P.O. Address: 1650 Memorex Drive, Santa Clara, CA 95050
Tel. No.: (408) 919-6137